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AUTHOR Blair, Timothy R.
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ABSTRACT

The most popular approach to effective change in teacher inservice programs is predicated on an organizational or bureaucratic problem-solving model that does not take into consideration teacher attitudes. A study of inservice programs both highlighted the implementation stage as being crucial for determining whether a proposed change would be successful and isolated effective and ineffective implementation strategies. The study also identified the degree to which teachers believed in themselves and their ability to be successful with all students as a major factor in the change process. In order to incorporate teacher effectiveness findings into classroom practice, a recommended strategy would be to focus on attitudes and implementation. This approach stresses teacher potential rather than deficiencies, allows teachers to use alternative pedagogies to accomplish a goal, and recognizes teachers' individual styles and personalities as well as the traits of individual classrooms. Other key components of an inservice model that focuses on the classroom teacher as the real agent of change include (1) faculty identification of goals and objectives congruent with their assumptions and beliefs, (2) continual monitoring of proposed changes, and (3) adaptation of changes being implemented to pupils and programs. (HTH)

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Development of Inservice Models to Implement Teacher Effectiveness Research Findings

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Timothy R. Blair

College of Education

Dept. EdCI

Texas A&M University

College Station, Texas 77843

CS006993

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Development of Inservice Models to Implement
Teacher Effectiveness R[illegible]rch Findings

We live in a time of change. How frequently we utter this statement. Change is another word for life in our computerized, highly mobile world. However, it is no secret to teacher educators that it is extremely difficult to change teacher practices. An underlying assumption of inservice teacher education is teachers are able to form new habit patterns and to change various aspects of the teaching-learning situation. Yet, in spite of the growing body of knowledge concerning teacher and school effectiveness emanating from research investigations, the implementation of these findings into practice remains an enigma in many school systems.

To begin to understand the complexities of the change process, one must first acknowledge and respect the two major types of change. Many times, we lose our perspective on what change really means. It seems the changes many people recognize and identify are the addition of things to the classroom or school. This is only structural change -- real change occurs only when teacher attitudes change. Structural change is easy but changing teacher attitudes and the resulting behavioral change is quite a different matter.

The most popular approach to effecting change in inservice programs is predicated on an organizational or bureaucratic model (Brubaker and Nelson, 1975). The inservice delivery system usually proceeds through the following steps: problem identification, consideration of possible solutions, decision on strategy or method,

implementation of decision, and the evaluation component. The missing link or factor that is not given primary consideration in this problem-solving model is teacher attitudes. And yet, teacher attitudes should be at the heart of the educational change process. Brubaker and Nelson also feel that teacher attitudes should be of primary importance in the process of change. In rejecting the bureaucratic model, the authors state:

> Some people make the mistake of viewing the educational change process as primarily a set of skills. Once these skills are properly exercised, the desired change or series of desired changes are set into motion. This position is based on a relatively simple and sequential idea of behavioral change: once the goals are set, the proper stimulus must be invoked on the selected target in order to achieve the desired response. This skill development position fails to take into account the fact that people are more than they appear to be. That is, others' perceptions of a person's behavior fail to adequately or validly take into account some of the following factors: attitudes, intentions, motives, and basic assumptions about reality. (p. 63)

There is an accumulating literature to suggest that effecting and sustaining change through the traditional bureaucratic model is extremely difficult and more attention be paid to teacher attitudes and local characteristics (Berman and McLaughlin, 1978, Mertens and Yarger, 1981, Samuels, 1981). Those interested in implementing recent teacher effectiveness findings into classrooms should heed this literature. In the Rand study by Berman and McLaughlin, 293 federal projects were evaluated regarding the establishment and maintenance of educational change. The authors found that successful projects were fragile and had difficulty in maintaining their success over a number of years. Also, successful projects were not easily disseminated to new locations with the replicated projects achieving

less than in the original sites. The Rand study highlighted the implementation stage as being the crucial stage in whether or not a proposed change would be successful or not. The authors state: "We found that these strategies (i.e. implementation) could spell the difference between success or failure, almost independently of the type of innovation or educational method involved; moreover, they could determine whether teachers would assimilate and continue using project methods or allow them to fall into disuse." The study found the following implementation strategies to be either effective or ineffective.

Effective:

- Concrete, teacher-specific, and extended training
- Classroom assistance from project or district staff
- Teacher observation of similar projects in other classrooms, schools, or districts
- Regular project meetings that focused on practical problems
- Teacher participation in project decisions
- Local materials development
- Principal participation in training (Berman and McLaughlin)

Ineffective:

- Outside consultants
- Packaged management approaches
- One-shot, preimplementation training
- Pay for training
- Formal evaluation
- Comprehensive projects (Berman and McLaughlin)

Directly related to effective implementation strategies, the study identified the variable of teacher efficacy as being significant on all outcomes. The degree to which teachers believed in themselves and their ability to be successful with all students was a major factor in the change process.

In order to incorporate teacher effectiveness findings into classroom practice, a suggested strategy would be to focus on these variables (i.e. teacher attitudes and implementation stage). This approach would assume teacher potential not teacher deficiency (the implicit rationale of traditional inservice) and would realize that successful change will only result by affording choices to teachers. That is, the strategy would seek to override the major barrier to change of requiring teachers to utilize a particular brand of pedagogy by proposing various alternatives or options to accomplish a goal. Such an approach respects teachers' individual styles and personalities and realizes that effective instructional procedures will also vary depending upon student characteristics, subject matter and grade level taught. Speaking to this very point, Rubin (1978) stated, "For if any one thing in teaching is certain it is that a given learning objective can be accomplished in multiple ways....Hence, the sine qua non of healthy teacher in-service education is to adapt to, rather than obliterate, individual difference." In addition, it must be realized that teachers have to make sense with what they are doing and their present situation makes sense to them. Inservice developers should work to create a degree of dissatisfaction in teachers in their present methods and techniques. It is only after some

dissatisfaction is realized between the present situation and the characteristics of effective teachers and schools gleaned from recent investigations that a road to change can be paved.

In addition to the effective implementation strategies highlighted by Berman and McLaughlin, the following summarizes the key characteristics of an inservice model focusing on the real agents of change -- classroom teachers.

Teacher Effectiveness Inservice Model

Indicators:

- Assumption of teacher potential (staff development) not teacher deficiency
- Recognition of teacher belief system
- Presentation of teacher effectiveness findings
- Recognition that teachers have to make sense with what they are doing - their present situation makes sense
- Work to create dissatisfaction - present in a non-evaluative way descriptive information showing examples of reality
- Faculty identification of goals and objectives congruent with their assumptions and beliefs
- Identification of options to accomplish goals - so teachers don't have to change value systems
- Continual monitoring of proposed changes
- Adaptation of changes being implemented in light of pupils and program
- Pervasive concern for the promotion of teacher efficacy to achieve identity and commitment

Teacher effectiveness research has produced significant findings in the last decade (Rosenshine, 1979). Unfortunately, our knowledge regarding the fusion of these findings into practice has not been as significant. With recent research affirming the importance of the teacher on students' reading achievement, it follows that strategies for inservice programs focus on the unique styles and personalities of teachers. If reading programs are to change in our schools, so too teachers must change. Knowledge and transmission of characteristics of effective reading programs will not reach their fruition until innovative, teacher-centered inservice delivery systems are practiced by teacher educators.

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